A Publication for Employees of the Missouri Department of Transportation

Connections

August 2009

New STIP Approved, Uncertain Future Ahead

story by Sue Cox, photos by Cathy Morrison

Each year, MoDOT spells out specific transportation projects planned in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, or STIP. It provides a consistent and constant road map for Missourians to see how their transportation money is spent.

"The STIP is our promise to the public we serve," said Transportation Planning Director Machelle Watkins, "and no matter where we work in the state, this is our guide for the work we'll do on Missouri's transportation system." Watkins' Jefferson City office is responsible for putting together the transportation program.

Following the update of the program each summer, it's presented to the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission for approval. The new fiscal years 2010-2014 program approved at the recent July commission meeting includes good news – many new projects will be built next year, and not-so-good news – ahead is little money for more than taking care of the existing system.

The significant highway and bridge improvements in the first year of the new program can be attributed to funding from the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and MoDOT's Safe & Sound Bridge Improvement Program. Funding for the new Mississippi River Bridge in St. Louis is also included.

However, by 2011, transportation funding drops by more than half and will continue falling to only one-third of the 2010 amount in subsequent years.

The construction program for fiscal year 2010 totals $1.3 billion. In fiscal year 2011, the program drops to just $652 million, and by fiscal year 2014, only $421 million will be available for transportation projects.

"While very much welcomed and needed, the recovery act funding we received is not a silver bullet," said Director

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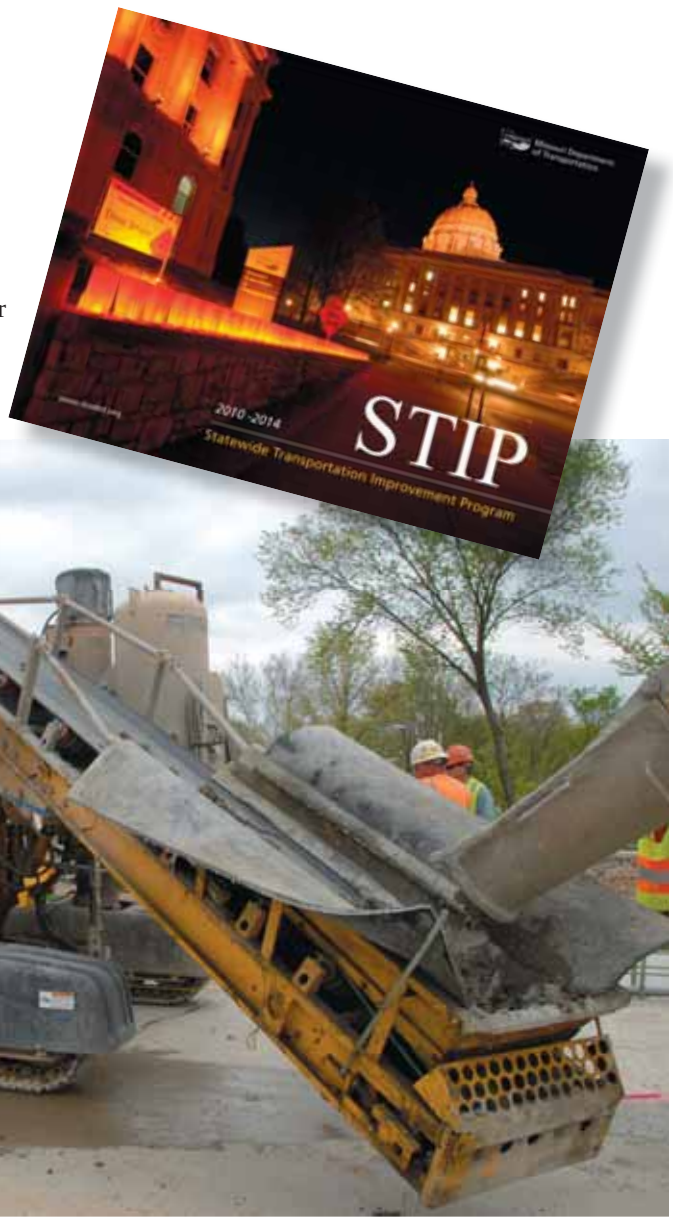

Senior Materials Technician Kelvin Mack works on the I-64 project. MoDOT's five-year transportation plan keeps Missourians informed of upcoming projects in their area.

First-in-USA Diverging Diamond Interchange Moving Traffic Quickly, Safely in Springfield

by Bob Edwards

Cathy Morrison

The first-in-the-USA Diverging Diamond Interchange, which opened June 21 at Route 13 and Interstate 44, initially has achieved its goal to move more traffic in less time through the busy northwest gateway to Springfield.

"It's doing exactly what we wanted it to do," said District 8 Project Manager Don Saiko, who helped adapt the European design for Route 13/I-44.

"Nearly everyone I've talked to has said traffic really is flowing smoothly," Springfield Mayor Jim O'Neal said at a July 7 ribbon cutting. The event was presided over by Springfieldian Jim Anderson, who recently completed eight years of service on the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission.

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Commissioner Kehoe Resigns

Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission Chairman Mike Kehoe announced his resignation at the commission's Springfield meeting in July.

"The department has delivered on its promises to the people of Missouri often times under budget and ahead of schedule," said Kehoe. "I am honored to have served with great commissioners and with the outstanding employees at MoDOT. It is, however, time for a new chapter in my life."

Vice-Chairman David Gach of St. Joseph was elected chairman and Rudy Farber of Neosho was elected vice-chairman. Governor Jay Nixon will also appoint a new commissioner.

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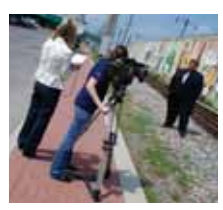
15 
Buckle Up!
2008 America's Got Talent winner records PSA in D10

Bolder Signs To Make State Highways Safer

story by Sally Oxenhandler, photos by Cathy Morrison

Slippery when wet. Deer crossing. Falling rock.

Those are just a few of the warning messages carried by the yellow signs that dot state interstates and highways.

Now the signs that let you know about a sharp curve, a narrow bridge or a dead end up ahead are getting brighter. We have changed the type of sheeting we use on the diamond-shaped warning signs to a fluorescent yellow to make them more visible.

"These new signs will shout out at people a little louder than the old ones," said Don Hillis, director of system management. "We want motorists to be prepared for changing road conditions so they can adjust their driving accordingly and stay safe."

We won't be replacing good signs just to put up signs made with the new material. Instead, the new fluorescent signs will be put up whenever existing signs are replaced due to age, vandalism or wear and tear. There are thousands of warning signs on the state highway system, and it could take up to 10 years to replace all of them.

"Motorists will see a gradual change in the signs," Hillis said. "It wouldn't be a good use of taxpayer dollars to replace signs that are in good shape and functioning properly, so we'll phase in the new signs as we replace old ones."

The new, brighter signs are a little more expensive than the old ones – about $12 more for a typical 36-inch warning sign. But Hillis says it's a small price to pay for the safety benefits that come with more visible signs.

MoDOT's sign shop, located in Jefferson City, makes the signs. Last year, the shop produced about 35,000 warning signs.

New Message Boards to Make Rural Highways Safer

MoDOT Is First in the Nation to Put Federal Safety Funds to Work

by Sally Oxenhandler

Missouri's rural highways, while scenic, carry unique safety challenges. Crashes are more likely to occur at higher speeds, the vehicle occupants are more likely to be unbelted and accident victims are further away from medical help.

To help combat those issues, we will be using an $800,000 federal grant to install six additional electronic message boards and 12 closed circuit television cameras in south central and southeast Missouri. The new equipment will be installed in areas with high traffic volumes and incident rates.

Missouri is the first state in the nation to award a project that will use federal grant funds provided through the Rural Safety Innovation Program. To take advantage of these funds, states were encouraged to use technology to make rural roads safer. They also had to act quickly because the money had to be obligated during the current federal fiscal year.

The permanent signs, along with the cameras, will be installed along Interstates 55 and 57 and Route 60 to inform motorists about road closings, accidents and hazardous road conditions. MoDOT staff will use the cameras, which provide valuable visual support through real-time traffic video, to monitor traffic flow and manage incidents on the roadways. It will enable them to verify an incident and instantly send an alert to the appropriate message boards, such as "Accident ahead. Be prepared to stop."

The signs are located where they're easy to see and near exits so travelers can decide to get off the highway if traffic is backed up. Messages can be changed instantaneously with the push of a computer button.

The project completion date is set for Dec. 1. The six signs erected under this contract will bring the total number of rural message boards throughout the state to 66. This is one of three contracts this year that will include installation of closed circuit television cameras. This project includes 12 of a total of 68 cameras to be installed along the rural interstate.

"We've seen the safety benefits of getting timely travel information to motorists with these signs, so we were thrilled to get additional funding to install more cameras and message boards," said Don Hillis, director of system management.

Because the Delta Region Authority provided much of the grant funding, the winning projects had to be located within the authority's boundaries. The authority is a federal-state partnership that serves 252 counties and parishes in parts of Missouri, Alabama, Arkansas, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi and Tennessee.

While rural roads carry less than half of America's traffic, they account for more than half of the nation's vehicular deaths. Last February, the U.S. Department of Transportation launched the Rural Safety Initiative to address this issue. The Rural Safety Innovation Program grants are part of that initiative.

STIP Approval

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Pete Rahn. "It has helped delay a bad transportation situation, but without additional funding for future transportation projects, our roads and bridges will once again begin to deteriorate."

An important element of the STIP's development is the ongoing, year-round public participation process. Working with local officials, community leaders, elected representatives and other Missouri citizens, the districts have determined their regions' highest priority transportation needs and projects.

"Local communities have had significant influence over how their transportation dollars are spent and which projects will be built first," said Watkins.

A complete list of projects or more information about the STIP is available at *www.modot.org.*

Performance Plus Changes Encourage Outstanding Results

MoDOT employees have proven themselves remarkable at achieving results, and the Performance Plus Program is a shining example. Since the program's inception in 2006, statewide performance has, in many instances, maintained best-in-nation levels.

This summer, enhanced performance targets have been set to encourage further improvements and to reward truly outstanding results.

These changes to the Performance Plus Program were effective July 1:

First, the performance criteria and targets were changed for the Project Scoping and Estimating Incentive. The performance targets were modified to establish "floors" on estimates. They reward outstanding performance and foster continual improvement – they also allow for flexibility in individual projects.

The new performance targets as of July 1, 2009 are:

Tier 1 Projects awarded in district: - 10% to + 5% (district quarterly)
Tier 2 Total of all projects awarded in district: - 5% to + 1% (district yearly)
Tier 3 Projects awarded statewide: - 5% to + 1% (statewide yearly)

Changes have also taken place to the Construction Cost Savings Incentive.

A new provision applies to Tier 1, where each project office must have final plans completed within 120 days for the projects being reviewed for that specific quarter. Provisions for exceptions are possible and will be determined by the State Construction and Materials Engineer.

"These changes demonstrate MoDOT's commitment to continual improvement," said Mara Campbell, organizational results director. "As soon as we reach a benchmark and achieve the results we're after, we find another benchmark to work towards."

PerformancePlus

Gov. Nixon Keeps Motorcycle Helmet Law Intact

by Sally Oxenhandler

Citing increased health care costs to taxpayers and the safety of Missouri's motorcycle riders, Gov. Jay Nixon on July 2 vetoed a law that would have allowed motorcyclists over the age of 21 to ride without a helmet except on interstate highways.

"In terms of lives and of dollars, the cost of repealing Missouri's helmet law simply would have been too high," Nixon said. "By keeping Missouri's helmet law intact, we will save numerous lives, while also saving Missouri taxpayers millions of dollars in increased health care costs. Keeping our helmet law in place was the safe and cost-effective choice for Missouri."

Director Pete Rahn thanked the governor for showing "courageous and compassionate leadership by vetoing the repeal of the motorcycle helmet law."

MoDOT had earlier conducted a study that showed 84 percent of Missourians support the state's current law requiring motorcyclists to wear helmets. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that 42 additional lives were saved in Missouri in 2007 because of motorcycle helmet use.

Cathy Morrison

MoDOT Gives Green to Get Green

by Kristi Jamison

Looking for new ways to protect the environment, MoDOT is testing a concept to entice contractors to get green by giving some green. Under its pilot green incentive program, MoDOT will assign a "green credit" goal for a contractor and appoint "green credit" values for the use of various environmentally friendly practices such as recycling, reducing pollution and using alternative fuels.

This is how the program works. For meeting or exceeding the goal, the contractor can earn various award levels for using green methods and materials on highway construction projects, all appropriately named for some of Missouri's better-known natural icons. If a contractor:

meets the goal, they earn a Redbud Award ($5,000 bonus);

exceeds the goal by five credits, they earn a Hawthorn Award ($10,000 bonus); or

exceeds the goal by 10 credits, they earn a Dogwood award ($15,000 bonus).

Conversely, a contractor failing to meet its green credit goal will be charged damages in the amount of $2,500 per credit they fall short.

"MoDOT works hard to be a good steward of the environment, and we want to get our contracting partners on board with us," said Director Pete Rahn. "Providing incentives is a great way to demonstrate how serious we are about encouraging the use of environmentally-friendly practices. It's a commonsense approach toward building an environmentally sound transportation system."

The incentive program is being tested for the first time on the Interstate 270/ Dorsett/Page project in St. Louis. Niall Jansson, a District 6 resident engineer who will oversee this project, took the lead to develop the incentive system. His ideas were incorporated with the work of another group, led by Field Materials Engineer Joe Schroer, who were developing a recommendation from a Partnering for Innovative Efficiencies meeting last fall to offer incentives that would encourage contractors to use recycled materials on highway construction projects.

Cathy Morrison

Contractors can turn green credits into cash bonuses for using environmentally friendly practices such as recycling, reducing pollution and using alternative fuels.

As a result, MoDOT is including a Job Special Provision in the St. Louis project's contract that will require the winning contractor to include a number of earth-friendly construction practices.

The special provision is based on the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, or LEED, rating system that provides environmental construction standards for the commercial building industry.

Roadside Memorial Signs

A new drunk driving awareness program and an impaired driving campaign will begin this August to raise awareness of the dangers of impaired driving.

The annual You Drink & Drive. You Lose. campaign kicks off Aug. 19 with the unveiling of a new roadside memorial sign for impaired driving victims.

"Many people have erected memorials of their own design to honor lost loved ones," said Don Hillis, director of system management. "The new signs offer a more permanent memorial while raising awareness of the risk of impaired driving."

The signs are part of legislation that goes into effect Aug. 28 called David's Law. The law is named after David Poenicke, a victim of impaired driving. Poenicke's sister was a leading force in getting the legislation passed.

The blue memorial signs read "Drunk Driving Victim" and include the person's initials along with the month and year they were killed. At the bottom it reads "Think About It!"

In 2008, 262 people were killed, 1,113 seriously injured and 3,398 received minor injuries in crashes involving an impaired driver.

The You Drink & Drive. You Lose. campaign includes paid media and statewide sobriety checkpoints from Aug. 21 to Sept. 7 aimed at deterring impaired drivers.

To learn more, visit *saveMOlives.com*.

Diverging Diamond

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The city of Springfield split the cost of the $2.9 million project with MoDOT.

Under the new Diverging Diamond Interchange configuration, the opposing lanes of Route 13 (Kansas Expressway) criss-cross at traffic signals at the ends of the bridge over I-44. Crossing the bridge, oncoming traffic is on the right, separated by concrete barriers with a pedestrian walkway between the barriers. This gives left-turning vehicles on Kansas Expressway a "free left" turn, without backups, onto the I-44 on-ramps. At the same time, through traffic continuing north or south on Kansas Expressway travels more steadily through the interchange.

Saiko credits District 4 for pursuing the Diverging Diamond design in Missouri as early as 2005 when District 4 Project Manager Susan McCubbins, now retired, presented the design at a statewide meeting. She said her design team found the DDI had been working for 20 years at an interchange in Versailles, France, and worked with the Federal Highway Administration on a simulation.

Saiko, who remembered the presentation, concluded the Route 13/I-44 interchange would be a good place to use the DDI design. The bridge over I-44 did not have to be replaced but could be repaired. The project could be done in six months, not 1-1/2 years for a more standard interchange rebuild. By getting in and getting out that quickly, safety would be enhanced and the public would have the improvement sooner rather than later.

District Traffic Engineer Joe Rickman, who has overseen several additions or changes to the signing and striping since the retrofitted interchange opened, said the design is functioning amazingly well, even during morning and afternoon rush hours.

"There's no reason to believe it won't have greatly improved safety," Rickman said, noting that the police reported only one crash on the DDI portion of the interchange in the first three weeks after its opening -- a rear-ender involving two vehicles exiting eastbound I-44 to go south on Route 13. No crashes have occurred where traffic is criss-crossing into the new DDI configuration.

Spotlight on Diversity

In the Spotlight on Diversity column this month, the Employee Advisory Council would like to share its response to a recent employee concern regarding opportunities for promotion.

An employee wrote: "I am a non-engineering graduate that has been working in construction for the past eight years. I was hired in 2001. During my interview for the assistant construction technician position I was told that if I worked enough years in construction and performed my duties well I would be able to move through the ranks to a senior construction inspector. Last month I was informed that a statewide policy of not promoting non-engineering personnel from senior construction technician positions to construction inspector positions would be going into effect.

My concern is that this policy is not statewide and I do not believe that it is fair to change the rules in the middle of the game for people that were hired in as technicians and told that they would be able to move into inspector positions. I also feel that many technicians would not have taken these positions if we had been told up front that our career ladders ended at senior construction technician positions.

Thank you for your time and any information you can give me will be appreciated."

A summary of the EAC's response to the employee's concern follows: *District engineers and division leaders first and foremost determine their staffing needs. If a need for a construction inspector is determined, districts are expected to fill that position with individuals who have the required bachelor degree whenever possible.*

When they cannot find someone who meets the required bachelor degree, there is a personnel policy that allows non-degreed employees to be considered based on their relevant experience being substituted for the bachelor degree. The decision to advertise the position to allow non-degreed employees to compete for it is at the discretion of the district or division leadership. If allowed to compete, a non-degreed employee with a high school diploma and at least eight years experience in construction technician work could then be considered for a construction inspector job. It does not guarantee an employee that he/she will move into the inspector job, but it makes him/her eligible to compete for the inspector job.

Construction technicians should not expect to move automatically into the construction inspector career ladder, but instead should be prepared to compete with others when a construction inspector position is advertised. The better their performance is while in technician positions and the better they represent department values while doing their work, the better their chances are to compete well when an inspector position opens up.

To view the EAC's full response, including several applicable personnel policies, go to *wwwi/intranet/eac/Frequently_asked_questions/* and click the Pay/Salary category.

Breathe Easier Missouri Metros

Agencies Collaborate to Improve Air Quality

by Kristi Jamison

Missourians can breathe a little easier soon. MoDOT is turning over another new leaf by installing equipment that will reduce emissions from our fleets in Missouri's three largest metro areas. These efforts will help improve air quality and public health in Kansas City, St. Louis and Springfield by reducing diesel emissions by about 288 tons per year – or enough to fill 427 Goodyear blimps!

The Missouri Department of Natural Resources and MoDOT worked together to secure a $726,227 grant through the Diesel Emission Reduction Act. This grant will help offset costs for MoDOT to retrofit a portion of its fleet with new technologies that will reduce the pollutants that lead to air quality compliance issues. These upgrades will also have an added bonus of increasing the fleet's fuel efficiency.

"We research and adopt new technologies that enable us to better protect the environment and improve the air we breathe," said Director Pete Rahn. "Installing these devices will also help us reduce the amount of fuel we use, and we will put those savings right back into our roads and bridges."

DNR will administer the grant over the next two years by reimbursing MoDOT for some of the costs to install pollutant-reducing devices on 135 pieces of diesel equipment in the St. Louis, Kansas City and Springfield districts. These devices include diesel oxidation catalysts to control emissions and automatic shutdown/startup devices or auxiliary power units to reduce idling. The grant will also enable MoDOT to upgrade engines in 17 dump trucks and replace five dump trucks earlier than scheduled with models that meet current EPA standards.

The new diesel oxidation catalyst muffler installed on this truck will help to reduce emissions in the Kansas City area.

August Service Anniversaries

35 Years

Clarence E. Lloyd	D2

30 Years

Orville M. Johnson	D4
Robert C. Lauer	D6
Mark W. Willis	D7
Ronald J. Kitsmiller	D7
Vernon J. Hartman	CO

25 Years

Gary W. Wilson	D1
Don G. Wichern	D1
David L. Dennis	D2
Jerry L. Wessel	D2
Patrick J. O'Rourke	D5
Raymond L. Bledsoe	D5
Stephen E. Brown	D5
John M. Kelemen	D6
Michael K. Earls	D6
Michael T. King	D6
Ronald L. Combs	D7
Rhonda M. Holzhauer	D7
Rebecca J. Baltz	D7
Mark R. Brown	D7
Kirk E. Juranas	D8
Danny M. Maples	D8
Justin D. Cunningham	D10
James R. Zeiger	CO
Glennon J. Stratman	CO

20 Years

Gail Davis	D1
Larry C. Cornelius	D3
Jon M. Knickerbocker	D3
David B. MacDonald	D4
Debra P. Day	D6
Ann P. Warhol	D6

15 Years

Timothy K. Conover	D2
Marion T. Baker	D2
Randy L. Schuman	D4
Nichol M. Cook	D5
Steven E. Clark	D5
Jill M. Steiger	D6
Dean D. Fry	D6
Robin L. Wright	D7
Jeffrey P. Hillis	D10
Keith J. Bailey	CO
Brenda M. Braun	CO
Carol J. Griffin	CO
Bryan J. Heckman	CO
Steven E. Swofford	CO

10 Years

Jeffrey S. Redden	D1
James C. Morris	D1
Larry D. Jones	D2
Chad L. Arment	D3
Jaclyn A. White	D4
Lee M. McAllister	D4
Jeffrey E. Wisdom	D5
Douglas C. Zeigenbein	D5
Kyle W. Fischer	D5
Charles L. Inglish	D5
Tim M. Gallatin	D5
Shaire L. Fischer	D5
Scott O. McKinney	D6
Roger L. Mann	D7
Darren L. Adams	D7
Linda J. Bennett	D9
Shannon R. Chidester	D10
Jo Ann Secoy	D10
Mark A. Baumgartner	CO
James J. Cunningham	CO
Mary K. Seymore	CO
Janet K. Smyer	CO

5 Years

Justin D. Arnold	D1
Michael C. Abernathy	D2
Sarah E. Forney	D2
Kurt W. Blacklock	D3
Bruce A. Barnes	D4
Glenwood Simpson	D4
Donald G. Colbey	D4
Sandra K. Naylor	D4
Bruce A. Rackers	D5
Jason D. Witt	D5
Dan J. Kemper	D5
Jonathan R. Swagman	D6
Brandon L. Barke	D6
Tony L. Boyster	D6
James C. Dean	D6
Clinton F. Lewis	D6
Daniel J. Deters	D6
Floyd R. Cook	D7
Richard L. Gerlemann	D9
Audrey S. McCrite	D10
James A. Howell	D10
Thomas J. Brickhaus	D10
Reva M. Jones	CO
Erin R. Kremer	CO
Ronald A. Strickland	CO

June Retirements

Name	Location	Years of Service
Malcolm Babb	D10	31
Norman Cole	D10	30
Larry Musick	D1	26
Steven Giffen	D2	31
Glenn Walker	D2	25
Dale Durham	D4	21
Regan Magee	D4	11
Steven Thompson	D6	31
Max Drake	D7	10
Donald Schofield	D7	31
Dale Clayton	D8	31
Thomas Hayes	D8	32
James Rips	D8	25
Vicky Williams	CO	28
Marcus Howard	CO	31

In Memoriam

Retirees

Alfred J. Sharp	D1	June 1
Robert "Jake" F. Jacobs	D5	June 5
Thomas H. Benedict	D8	June 6
Clifford "Dean" D. Couts	D6	June 13
Donald T. Smith	CO	June 18
Dale G. Baer	CO	June 20
Robert F. Baumgartner	D3	June 22
Arthur "Bud" W. Bodamer	D5	June 27

CO
Central Office

Jefferson City Property Sold Through Realty to Roads

The Realty to Roads program has been making great strides over the last year, turning excess property into road improvements.

Statewide, MoDOT conveyed 228 parcels in fiscal year 2009, which is more than double the 112 excess parcels conveyed in fiscal year 2008. During the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2009, 72 excess parcels were conveyed as compared to 40 during the fourth quarter fiscal year 2008. One of the larger properties available in the Jefferson City area, 26 acres of land originally slated as a capital improvement property, sold for $1.7 million.

Revenue through the end of the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2009 from excess sales totals $4,271,783. The proceeds are returned to MoDOT's budget for road and bridge projects.

Several tools have been implemented that helped the Jefferson City property sell, including the use of brokers hired for their assistance in marketing. Another successful tool was a virtual tour provided on www.modot.org that served as a valuable marketing piece. These components led to this Central Office property selling at a price above the appraised value.

In July, one of the two Brokers provided the districts a training opportunity on current marketing techniques, the economy, and tips for thriving in the real estate market. The two training sessions were open to all districts with the training being offered in the Kansas City and St. Louis district offices.

In addition to the marketing tools and brokering assistance, Gregory Wood, Realty to Roads project director, says MoDOT has recognized a culture change that has helped achieve program goals. MoDOT is benefiting from the results by reinvesting the proceeds into our roads and bridges.

Shaun Schmitz

The Jefferson City property closed above the appraised value. Realty to Roads Project Director Gregory Wood (at head of table) met with the buyers and real estate advisors at the closing.

"It's important to ensure we get the best value for every dollar spent. We have a responsibility to taxpayers to achieve fair market value for these properties," said Wood.

Kelly Lucas, right of way director, said the districts have responded favorably to this initiative and have done an outstanding job balancing priorities while delivering results.

Route 66 Display

MoDOT's Historic Preservation section of the Design Division and Multimedia Services Group worked together to create 24 impressive display panels for the Interstate 44 Welcome Center that opened this spring.

The exhibit resulted from extensive research and highlights MoDOT's role in the creation of Route 66, including information on historical bridges, landmarks and the beginnings of the Missouri State Highway Department.

for more info

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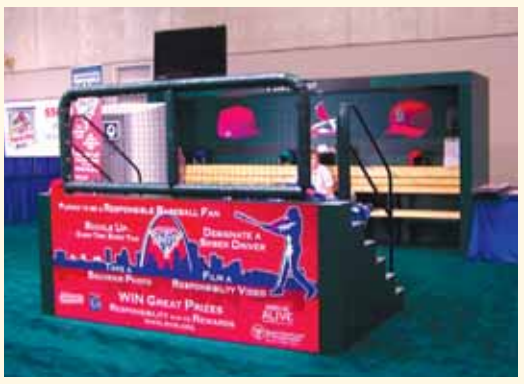
Groups Team Up for FanFest



Visitors to FanFest took souvenir photos in the replica Busch Stadium Cardinals dugout.

MoDOT Central Office and District 6 staff teamed up with IDOT and the TEAM Coalition to sponsor a booth at FanFest, an interactive event featured at the 2009 MLB All-Star Game. The exhibit was a reminder to baseball fans to drink responsibly, designate a sober driver and buckle up. Fans had the opportunity to take a picture or shoot a responsibility video in the replica Cardinals dugout. Read more and see a short video of the exhibit on MoDOT's blog at *www.modotblog.blogspot.com*.

Central Office Energy Improvements

Doug Record is working to shed more light in Central Office and improve MoDOT's energy efficiency.

Record is the General Service Manager for Central Office and has been overseeing a variety of changes to MoDOT buildings to make them more comfortable, organized and energy efficient.

Most recently, changes have taken place in the headquarters building on the second floor. The Safe & Sound Division and the Controller's Division have both been moved to the newly remodeled area. Improvements include an updated HVAC system, more efficient lighting and updated electrical work.

"The updates should make the working environment more comfortable and provide better indoor air quality," said Record.

The office also meets ADA requirements, which includes a minimum of a 36-inch hall clearance, a five-foot turning radius for wheelchair maneuvering, and reception counters not more than 36 inches high.

Other Central Office buildings have received updates as well. High-bay lights were replaced with fluorescent bay lighting in MoDOT's sign shop. The lights will dramatically increase efficiency.

"That project will have a strong cost-savings with payback in 2-3 years on energy costs," said Record.

Record says more updates are on the way. Other areas of the headquarters building will receive similar updates, as well as updated bathrooms that will be ADA compliant and feature high-efficiency fixtures.

Debbie Rickard, Controller, has seen another benefit for her division.

"The Controller's division was in two separate office spaces, and now we have the opportunity to all work together in one office area," said Rickard.

D1 Northwest

Last Month in the Northwest District

by M. Elaine Justus

Twelve Northwest District employees and their passengers participated in the "Ride for Remembrance" motorcycle rally that took place June 13. They unanimously declared it a beautiful day, a fine ride, and a worthy cause.

M. Elaine Justus

The District Office wanted to do their part by silently auctioning off baskets. There were movie baskets, and car wash baskets, but our favorite was the fairyland flower garden planted in an antique wheelbarrow by Jana Hughes of General Services.

John Cox

regularly on their local broadcast. Koelle took the opportunity to share the latest information about Safe & Sound projects, and the challenges of our financial future.

The crew of the Oregon Building was recognized on June 24 for their litter pick-up efforts in April. The Oregon crew picked up 300 bags of trash during April's No MOre Trash competition. For their efforts, the Jefferson City maintenance division treated the group and District Engineer Don Wichern to lunch at Boudreaux's Restaurant in St. Joseph.

M. Elaine Justus

KDOT's Secretary of Transportation Deb Miller shared the honors with Kansas State Rep. Jerry Henry, MoDOT's Director Pete Rahn and David Butler, mayor of Atchison.

M. Elaine Justus

District Maintenance and Traffic Engineer Koelle Barbour was recently interviewed by KTAJ-16 in St. Joseph. The cable station features MoDOT

Jon Morrow

On July 2, the official groundbreaking ceremony was held for the new Amelia Earhart bridge in Atchison, Kansas. The event took place at the Veterans' Memorial Park in Atchison, with the old bridge visible in the background. The project is a bi-state cooperative headed by the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT), with construction costs to be shared with MoDOT.

The contract has been awarded to Archer Western Contractors, Ltd., of Chicago, Illinois. The new bridge is being built 78 feet south of the existing bridge on U.S. 59, which will make the traffic impact minimal for the majority of construction. Jon Morrow, a local pilot, is providing us with daily aerial photographs of the work, which will be used to create a documentary in a couple of years when the new bridge is complete.

Holly L. Murphy

NoMORE Trash Winners: Tim Hays, Gail Davis, Don Buckles, Allan Markt, and Ed Hunziger. Not pictured is Jason Meyer.

for more info

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Seen From the Road

by Holly L. Murphy

Julie Blane

This picture was submitted by Julie Blane, construction project office assistant at the Maryville Area Office. She took this photo from the road near her home on Route B in Nodaway County. Julie recently noticed the momma raccoon making sure the coast was clear before heading out for a stroll with her three babies.

D2 NorthCentral

Amazing Race

by Tammy Wallace

On June 24, the antiquated city of Glasgow, nestled on the Missouri River with it's restored shop fronts and small-town charm, appeared to have stepped back into the early 1900s as 50 Model T Fords lined the streets, making their way towards the river.

A photo posted on the Ocean to Ocean web site makes a very clear statement about the hardships some of those early 1909 racers encountered. during that first endurance race.

The Model Ts, drivers and passengers were on day 11 of their journey from one side of the continent to the other, reenacting a historic race that originally took place 100 years earlier, the 1909 New York to Seattle Ocean to Ocean Endurance Race.

The 2009 convoy headed out from New York City Hall on June 14, and for the most part traveled the same route driven by those original racers, with some exceptions where road changes have been made. They also planned their overnight stays in the same locations as the 1909 racers.

Unlike the 1909 journey however, every car in this race was a Model T Ford. In the original race, only two Model Ts were entered.

The interesting part of this for the district has to do with the temporary ferry service at Glasgow. Last August when the bridge over the Missouri River at Glasgow was closed to construct a partial replacement of the bridge, a temporary ferry service was put in place for optional transportation. When the 50 Model Ts hit Glasgow they crossed the river using the ferry, which is exactly what the original racers had to do in 1909, since the bridge was not constructed until 1922.

Of course, the ferry ride across the river would have been very different for those 1909 racers, compared to the ride on the modern barge operated today by Calhoun Ferry Service. Calhoun's barge transports cars, farm equipment and even semi trucks from one side of the river to the other.

To commemorate the race, the district allowed the cars to use the ferry service free of charge, and each driver was given a ticket to keep as a souvenir. According to the Glasgow Missourian, the individuals distributing the tickets to the group were the daughter-in-law and granddaughter of the original ferry operator who took those first racers across the river in 1909.

On July 12, just as the original racers had done, the convoy completed their travels at the University of Washington's Drumheller Fountain. Although the University was not in existence in 1909, the fountain remains in the same location today.

This group of adventurers was not racing each other; merely traveling together seeing the countryside the same way that original group had done 100 years ago.

Details regarding the original race and how that race catapulted the sales of Henry Ford's Model T, and many other facts, photos, blogs, etc. regarding the Centennial reenactment can be found on the Ocean to Ocean web site at *http://oceantoocean.ning.com.*

Michael Heying, Glasgow Missourian

This beautifully restored Model T crosses the river on the ferry alongside modern vehicles and even a large piece of machinery.

Fun at the Fair

Hailey Kramer

Project Manager Preston Kramer explains to a visitor how the north end of the Alternate Route 63 will tie into the existing route.

The NEMO Fair in Kirksville is a big event for the area, drawing crowds of people from around the northern part of the state throughout the week-long fair. It's such a popular spot that it seemed fitting as a place to talk about another big event coming to the area, the Alternate Route 63 project.

Project Manager Preston Kramer, Resident Engineer Phil Sandifer and Transportation Project Designer Keith Killen spent several hours each day talking with approximately 200 visitors about the upcoming project scheduled to begin this summer.

The eight-foot display board detailing the project was the main attraction at the booth.

Wowing Those Minor Roads

In 2009 minor roads in the district are getting some well deserved TLC, and it's amazing to see the vast difference in the appearance of the roadway shown in the before and after photos.

Many of these improvements are being done thanks to monies received from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

It's easy to see how these kinds of results are WOWing our minor roads and our customers.

Brian Haeffner

Eighteen miles of the official Minor Roads WOW overlay project on Route 41 in Carroll and Saline Counties results in a brand new surface (above), including two-foot paved shoulders and rumble stripes. Route 202 (below) in Schuyler County received nine miles of new smooth surface from a contract level course. Both projects were accomplished with ARRA funding.

Brian Haeffner

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D3 Northeast

Work Life Center A One-Stop Shop

You won't just find a welcoming smile in MoDOT's Northeast District Work Life Center. Resources, technology and experts are plentiful to assist future, current and past employees with changing work and life issues.

(Above) Janet Groenda and Susan Ledbetter hold the ribbon while Dave Silvester, Paula Gough and Credit Union President Tom Richmond cut the ribbon to the new Work Life Center. (Below) During the open house, Andy Long, Kenny Glover and Stephon Williams enjoy refreshments in the new kiosk area of the Work Life Center.

"We wanted a one-stop shop where applicants, employees, families and retirees all felt welcome and can be provided with immediate assistance," explained Northeast District Engineer Paula Gough. "Some issues may require appointments with specific individuals, but we are working to cross train our staff so someone who is there can help right then," she continued.

About twenty employees were relocated into the new Work Life Center. "Our building crew did a great job getting everything ready and moving everyone," Gough said. She is particularly proud of the "one team" approach to getting the new center open, and the opportunities that are being considered with all the staff in the same physical location.

"Many of life or work changes can be done online, and while we are working toward improving that process, we still want everyone to know we can assist them with any changes inside the new Work Life Center," Gough added.

The online address for the Northeast District Work Life Center is *http://wwwi/intranet/d3/wlc/WorkLifeCenterNew.htm*.

Spelunking for Junk

When MoDOT was contacted to assist some spelunkers and the Missouri Department of Conservation in cleaning up a cave, the decision was easy. "It's not just because MoDOT is a 'greener' organization, it's because it was the right thing to do," said Assistant District Engineer Dave Silvester. Alan Leary, a senior environmental specialist for MoDOT, was contacted by a group of cavers who were familiar with the cave and all of the junk that had accumulated in it. This cave not only has beautiful formations of stalactites and stalagmites, but is also home to a rare bat known as the gray bat.

"It didn't appear the junk had been tossed into the cave," Leary said. Rather, a nearby sinkhole more than likely was the source for the junk, which included a refrigerator, tires, a washing machine and old chairs, to name a few.

"Because of the rare bats, the group wanted to try to protect the cave's location, so they didn't want a lot of publicity," Leary explained. However, MoDOT's multimedia group and the district's Community Relations team decided to video some of the clean-up to create a sort of "documentary" to show the inside of the cave to the public.

Along with Leary, representatives from MDC were inside the cave, assisting the cavers with cleaning. Roy Niemeyer, Frankford maintenance supervisor, Danny Behl, senior traffic specialist, and Rick Domzalski, transportation project manager, also helped.

Pictures and video are available online at *www.modot.org/northeast*.

Frankford Maintenance Supervisor Roy Niemeyer shines his flashlight down on some of the junk that was removed from the cave.

U.S. 54 Being Studied

Now that the Avenue of the Saints is completed, and the four-laning of U.S. 36 is underway, the Northeast District is looking to the future needs of the area.

The U.S. 54 corridor has been identified by our planning partners as a key improvement needed to move Missouri forward. An environmental impact study was completed more than a decade ago on U.S. 54 between Mexico and Bowling Green. Now, MoDOT is dusting off the books and performing a value engineering study to include input from area key stakeholders.

"We met with local leaders and elected officials from throughout the corridor area prior to the study, so we could hear their concerns, thoughts and suggestions to improve the corridor," explained Chris Knapp, transportation project manager.

John Miller (left) and Chris Knapp (standing) address stakeholders during a meeting about the U.S. 54 corridor.

The current two-lane highway transitions to four lanes just south of Mexico, where it continues south of the Ozarks.

The stakeholders agreed that improving the U.S. 54 corridor would be a boost to northeast Missouri's economy.

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Around the District

(Above) A new product was used for a recent chip seal between Canton and LaGrange. Haydite is a lightweight rock that has been shown to absorb more oil and stick better, leaving fewer rocks to brush away. The product has been used in other districts, but is a first for the Northeast District.

(Left) Laurie Travis, senior design technician, participates in a team-building exercise during the spring meeting with design, survey and right of way staff. Teams were asked to create a basket to catch an egg dropped from chin height. A variety of designs accomplished the same goal of successfully catching the egg without it breaking. Others didn't fare so well!

D4
KansasCityArea

A New and Improved Bridge

by Kerri Lewis

A ribbon-cutting ceremony at 10 a.m. on June 26 marked the completion of the new Clear Creek Bridge on Route 92 in Kearney. MoDOT, state and city officials were present to cut the ribbon to signify the importance of this project to the Kearney and Clay County area. MoDOT completed the bridge on time and under budget and had the road and new bridge ready for motorists on June 29.

Representative Doug Ervin was present to thank MoDOT for all the hard work done in the area to continue to provide a great transportation system. Mayor Dane of Kearney was also pleased, grateful that MoDOT was able to keep the old bridge open while construction was underway on the new structure.

In the summer of 2008, the Missouri Department of Transportation began replacing the Route 92 Bridge over Clear Creek in Kearney. The original bridge, built in 1933, has been completely replaced with a wider, safer structure to the south of the existing bridge. The replacement of the structurally deficient, functionally obsolete and substandard bridge over Clear Creek will create a safer route for those traveling through the area.

City, State and MoDOT officials perform the ceremonial cutting of the ribbon.

The old bridge can be seen to the left of the new structure. The new bridge is much wider and safer for all motorists.

Beth Wright, district engineer, explained the importance of building a safer, new structure.

State Rep. Doug Ervin spoke highly of MoDOT and all the work performed in the Clay County area.

A Piece of D4 History

This photo is Route 92 just east of Kearney when it was originally built in the early 1900s. An old steam engine can be seen in the background and was used throughout the making of this road. Photo courtesy of Tom Carey, Kearney Chief of Police.

Most Recent Safe & Sound Ribbon Cuttings

The Route O Bridge over the Grand River in Cass County received its ceremonial cutting of the ribbon in June.

Several stopped by to witness a second ribbon cutting for Platte County. The Route V Bridge over Jordan Branch was finished and open to traffic on time.

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D5 Central

Camden County Celebrates New Route 5

by Holly Dentner

When a project as big as the new Route 5 in Camden County is complete, it's only fitting for the celebration to showcase the work and give the community a chance to see it up close. That's exactly what happened on June 29, when the Central District worked with the Camdenton area community to hold a celebration that lasted all day long.

Cathy Morrison

A performance of the national anthem by the Bel Cantos Quartet opened the ceremony.

Construction on the new highway from south of the Niangua Bridge to near Route 7 started on May 15, 2006. The project was completed in two phases at a total construction award of $53 million. It took about three years to create the new four-lane road with straighter, wider lanes and shoulders.

Cathy Morrison

About 50 corvettes and classic cars were on display at the evening celebration.

Average traffic volumes on the existing Route 5 range from just over 8,000 vehicles per day on the north end to over 21,000 in the middle of Camdenton and 12,000 per day on the south end. Now that trip is much easier, faster, and safer for all those drivers.

More than seven million cubic yards of rock and soil were excavated for the project, making it the largest grading project in MoDOT history. It would take approximately 486,666 trucks to haul that much material. Lined up end to end, those trucks would stretch the distance between Washington D.C. and the California state line.

The realignment also included extensive drainage work and the construction of two interchanges and four bridges. There were 90-foot fill heights, 4,020 feet of concrete culverts, and 13,985 feet of pipe. Over 120,000 tons of asphalt were used for the paving work.

The all-day celebration for the new roadway started with the traditional ribbon-cutting ceremony in the morning. U.S. Congressman Ike Skelton joined Commissioner Mike Kehoe and other state and local dignitaries to see the new highway and cut the ribbon. The ceremony concluded with a parade of cars that traveled nearly the entire stretch of the new highway.

The celebration continued in the evening with a car show, fireworks and other activities on the new highway. The Lake of the Ozarks Corvette Club brought over 50 vehicles for display. A performance by a local dance group, a hot air balloon and a bounce house were also available for the community to enjoy as they explored the new highway on foot.

The new Route 5 opened to traffic during the overnight hours of June 29. Work on some of the connecting county roads continues through the summer, as does work on the shared four-lane project south of this project.

Cathy Morrison

Ladder trucks formed an arch for vehicles passing through during the parade of cars. The Camdenton and Mid-County fire departments provided the trucks and led the parade after the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Cathy Morrison

The Mule Kicker Cloggers, a dance group from Eldon, performed on the new Route 5 during the evening activities.

Cathy Morrison

Approximately 100 people attended the morning ribbon cutting, held just south of the new Route 54 and Route 5 interchange.

Holly Dentner

U.S. Congressman Ike Skelton was one of nine speakers at the morning ceremony.

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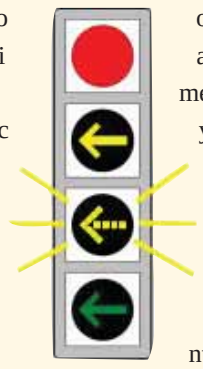
New Flashing Yellow Arrow Signal Coming to Tipton

A new traffic signal configuratio will soon come to mid-Missouri and provide safer left turns for motorists. MoDOT held a public meeting on July 15 to talk about the installation of a yield on flashing yellow arrow indication at the intersection of U.S. Route 50, Route 5 and Route B in Tipton.



orks and why it is being installed. The flashing yellow arrow means left turns are allowed, but you must first yield to oncoming traffic and pedestrians, and then proceed with caution. It will replace the traditional left turn on green "ball" indication currently used at the ntersection.

The meeting gave the community a chance to see how the new signal

Charlett Scott

Transportation Project Manager Trent Brooks talks with a Tipton resident during the meeting.

The new signal will be installed as the district upgrades the signal system as part of its regular maintenance schedule. Several states, including Missouri, are currently using this type of signal. MoDOT expects the new signals to become the preferred signal display for future yielding left turns.

A national study conducted for the Federal Highway Administration demonstrated the new indication helps to prevent crashes, move more traffic through intersections, and provide additional traffic management flexibility for road agencies.

D6
St. Louis Area

Special Thanks to Crews Making All-Star Week a Success

by Kara Price / contributed by Larry Doelling

MoDOT was prepared for the All-Star Game events in July, especially with the various closures it performed in downtown St. Louis City.

Kudos to the Broadway and Shreve maintenance buildings, as well as the sweeping crews, for the effort it took to get the city polished for the All-Star Game.

"The grass was cut, the trash was picked up and the shoulders were swept," said Larry Doelling, MoDOT maintenance superintendent for St. Louis City. "It took a combined effort to get it all cleaned up before the Fourth of July and then to keep it looking good for the game. Everyone really stepped up to get this area nice for these big events."

"Also, when you are a part of the unified command structure you never know what you maybe asked to help with," added Doelling. "The Shreve maintenance building was called upon to set up barrier walls downtown for the staging of all the mobile command units being used for the All-Star Game."

"I would like to thank everyone involved in making the All-Star Week a great success," said Deanna Venker, MoDOT area engineer for St. Louis City. "Thank you to the crews for all their hard work and preparation in making St. Louis shine during these events in July. Your dedication and high quality work for MoDOT is sincerely appreciated."

MODOT Shreve boom truck installs the barrier wall to protect the many command units from traffic.

Many mobile command units were used during the All-Star events.

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District 6 Breaks Ground on First ARRA Project in St. Louis Region

by Kara Price

The Missouri Department of Transportation, along with its contractor, St. Louis Bridge Construction Company, are pleased to kick off the construction for the Interstate 70 outer road at Memorial Drive resurfacing project. A groundbreaking ceremony was held on June 17 at Luther Ely Smith Square Park, located near the Arch in downtown St. Louis City. Elected officials, partners, the media and public were present to commemorate the project.

Work on the Interstate 70 outer road at Memorial project consists of bridge rehabilitation, improvements to the pavement, lighting, drainage, signals, signing, and Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) upgrades on the Interstate 70 outer road at Memorial Drive from the Interstate 44/55 interchange to Washington Avenue. Construction on Memorial Drive began on July 20 for sidewalk removal work. The project is expected to be complete by December 2009.

A groundbreaking ceremony was held on June 17 near the Arch at the corner of Memorial Drive and Market Street in downtown St. Louis City to commemorate the project.

The resurfacing work along Interstate 70 outer road at Memorial Drive is an American Recovery and Reinvestment Act project awarded by the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission in July 2009 for approximately $5 million dollars to St. Louis Bridge Construction Company. It is the first ARRA project in the St. Louis region to break ground.

"The intent of this funding is to put money into the economy and put people to work," said Missouri Department of Transportation Director Pete Rahn. "We've done everything we could from the first day to take advantage of the recovery act funding and help Missouri's economy. The projects we are able to tackle with this additional revenue will also make our transportation system safer and more efficient."

"This project is great news for motorists within the St. Louis metropolitan region," said Deanna Venker, MoDOT area engineer for St. Louis City. "This project will provide a much better first impression to visitors in St. Louis by creating a smooth driving experience and enhancing pedestrian facilities."

The speakers who commemorated the project include: Peggy Barnhart, office of US Sen. Kit Bond; Brendan Fahey, office of US Sen. Claire McCaskill; Dawn Fuller, office of Congressman William Lacy Clay; State Rep. Tishaura Jones; State Rep. Rachel Storch; City of St. Louis Alderwoman Phyllis Young; Todd Waelterman, office of City of St. Louis Mayor; Tom Bradley, Superintendent, Jefferson National Expansion Memorial; Jim Cloar, President and CEO, Downtown St. Louis Partnership.

Elected officials and partners of the project spoke at the ceremony with the media and public in attendance.

D7 Southwest

Weevils Wage War on Knapweed

by Wendy Brunner-Lewis

This summer, biological warfare hit District 7. The victims: spotted knapweed.

In late June, Central Office Roadside Management Specialist Rand Swanigan and District 7 Maintenance Superintendent Tim Rice released 2,000 weevils in the southern portion of the district in an eco-friendly effort to control knapweed.

Tim Rice

Tim Rice

Rand Swanigan releases the weevils into the knapweed.

"It will take three or four years to see results," said Rice. "The knapweed will still flower and fluff, but the amount of viable seeds in the flowers will be greatly reduced because of the weevils."

The University of Missouri Extension office in Lawrence County reported that in the last eight to 10 years spotted knapweed has quickly invaded roadsides in southwest and south central Missouri and has started to move into farm fields.

"Weevils have been successful in the western states over a period of about 30 years to lower the incidence of this weed," said Tim Schnakenberg, an agronomy specialist with University of Missouri Extension. "The good news is that in over 30 years of time they have not found it to invade desirable plant species, so we have no reason to think that it will become a pest to us.

"We are realistic enough to know that the weevils will not eliminate the weed over time, but like the thistle weevils released in the 1970s and 1980s, they will make a significant dent in the knapweed population," Schnakenberg said.

Sarcoxie Crew Treated to Trash Bash Lunch

The Sarcoxie Maintenance Crew was treated to a No MOre Trash Bash lunch at Golden Corral in Joplin July 15. During the month of April, the crew picked up 313 bags of trash, more than any other crew in the district. Lamar was second, with 203 bags of trash.

Pictured are (back row, left to right) Jeff Kaiser, Danny Bowling, Jody White, Tim Rice, Mark Higgs, Kyle Miller and Steve Campbell; (front row, left to right) Tim Wasson, Dennis Rothemeier and Brian Jones.

303.5 Hours Raised in ShareLeave Silent Auction

by Wendy Brunner-Lewis

Thanks to employees who donated items and to those who bid their Annual Leave and comp time to win those items, District 7 raised 303.50 hours for the ShareLeave fund.

Last year District 7 had six employees use 2,457 hours of ShareLeave, which was the most of any district or Central Office.

"I wanted us to do something fun to help build up the ShareLeave hours," said District Engineer Becky Baltz. "A silent auction using hours instead of money was something different, and I think we had some fun with it."

The final numbers raised during the silent auction were:

- Auction bidders who did not win their bid: 9 bidders donated a total of 37.00 hours
- Auction bidders who won their bid: 14 bidders donated a total of 220.50 hours
- Non-auction participants who just donated their time: 5 employees donated 46.00 hours
- Total hours received: 303.50 hours
- Total employees donating time: 28

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D8
Springfield Area

Team Effort Brings DDI to Reality in D8

by Bob Edwards

Many MoDOT people working cooperatively had a hand in moving the Diverging Diamond Interchange from an intriguing French design being considered in many locations across the United States to first-in-the-nation reality in Springfield.

"It was a big team effort," said Transportation Project Designer Stacy Reese. Her design team worked closely with Project Manager Don Saiko to adapt the DDI to the Route 13/Interstate 44 interchange, opened to traffic June 21.

Staffers in Design, Planning, Right-of-Way and Traffic played key roles.

So did Administration. Without support from District Engineer Kirk Juranas, the project would not have been possible, Saiko said.

"There were just too many positives that outweighed the (potential) negatives. I thought it was worth the risk," Juranas said. "Our staff did a wonderful job."

District 4 wanted to build the first DDI in an industrial area in Kansas City, but had to put it off because another project nearby was a higher priority. Still, District 4's DDI won a MoDOT Practical Design award for excellence in 2007. "Our hats are off to them," Juranas said.

Planning Manager Frank Miller worked out the funding for the project, which included a 50-50 cost split with the city of Springfield, using its 1/8-cent transportation sales tax.

Senior Highway Designer Ray Cook, Route 13/I-44 lead designer, said he sought background information from District 4 as he began the design work. The design fell into place quickly once Cook placed the pedestrian walkway down the middle of the Route 13 bridge instead of on one side or the other. "It made it more symmetrical," he said.

Signal coordination was crucial to the project. Intermediate Traffic Studies Specialist Brian Doubrava did the computer modeling and signal timing. Incident Response Coordinator Earl Wallace was involved in traffic control measures taken above and beyond what was required of the contractor.

Construction was overseen primarily by Intermediate Construction Inspector Jason Evenden and Senior Construction Technician David Long.

Preparations to implement the DDI in District 8 included help from Community Relations in an extensive public information campaign in late 2008 and the first six months of 2009. The idea was to help people learn how to drive the new-style interchange. The effort included two public meetings, presentations at various community groups in Springfield and Bolivar, door-to-door visits at businesses located near the interchange and stories in the Springfield and Bolivar news media.

An animation developed by a consultant working closely with Saiko, demonstrating how the interchange is supposed to work, was taken to meetings and posted on the District 8 web site. "People were able to follow it and prepare themselves," he said of the animation. "Once they watched it, they said, 'OK, this makes sense.'"

Another key element in the DDI project's success was the prime contractor, Hartman Construction of Springfield. Juranas said Hartman made an extraordinary effort to complete the project on time. He asked owner Dean Hartman to have the interchange ready for a July 7 ribbon cutting. "He promised me he would do it and he did," Juranas said.

More DDI projects are in the works. District 8 is working with the city of Springfield on a DDI for the interchange at National Avenue and the James River Freeway (Route 60). Construction is scheduled to begin later in 2009. District 4 and District 6 both have DDI projects ready to go. Other states are building or preparing to build DDI interchanges as well.

"Talkin' Transportation" Call-In Radio Show

KWTO 560 AM, Springfield

10-10:50 a.m. Wednesdays

radiospringfield.com

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Bob Edwards

D8 at Work

Working on a chip seal operation on Business Route 60 in Mountain Grove (top photo) are Mountain Grove Maintenance Crew Leaders Bill Freeman, left, and Karen Mace, driving spreader, with Hartville Maintenance Supervisor Wayne Shaver, center.

Speaking in a news interview (middle photo) in Kimberling City is Transportation Project Manager Linda Bokel, right. She discusses a preliminary plan to add lanes and make other improvements to Route 13 between Branson West and Kimberling City.

Handing out fliers (bottom left photo) on the June 30 opening of a five-mile stretch of new northbound lanes of Route 13 north of Springfield is Bolivar Senior Maintenance Worker Brian Proctor. This was an extra measure to alert drivers to a new stop sign.

Checking signal timing at Route 13/I-44 in Springfield (bottom right photo) is Intermediate Traffic Studies Specialist Brian Doubrava. He also developed the computer model for the new Diverging Diamond Interchange.

Maintenance Veteran Retires

by Angela Eden

Ava Regional Maintenance Supervisor Tom Bentley

Service: 32 years (Hired Dec. 1, 1977)

Career: Maintenance worker to senior maintenance worker, Wasola, 1977-1997; maintenance crew leader, Gainesville, 1997-2002; local maintenance supervisor, Wasola, 2002-2005; regional maintenance supervisor, Ava, 2005-2009

Favorite Tasks: "I loved plowing snow in the daytime. I enjoyed running the grader and the sign work."

Memorable Accomplishments: Enjoyed writing accident reports for Risk Management with extensive narrative detail and a sense of humor

Bentley

Quote: "I'll miss hassling people."

Post-MoDOT Plans: Doing whatever he feels like; spending more time with family including wife, Phyllis; "taking up bad habits" like hunting and fishing

D9
SouthCentral

Addition of a Southern Weekend Crew is a Success for All Involved

by Christi Turkleson

The South Central District established a northern weekend crew in April 2008. The overwhelming success of that pilot program has resulted in the recent addition of a southern weekend crew in District 9.

The northern weekend crew was developed last year, in part, to achieve a greater work/life balance for employees. It enabled those who work during the week to avoid on-call status during the weekend. According to Maintenance Superintendent Charles Schroyer, the pilot program yielded many positive results. "Among the many benefits, employees on the north weekend crew help keep Interstate 44 open and traffic moving freely. The crew works traffic, assists motorists, and sets up quick detours as needed," he said.

Maintenance Superintendent Mark Simpson said he has seen the same success replicated with the southern weekend crew. The southern crew was established in April 2009, with a focus on Routes 60 and 63. The crew includes several employees that transferred from regular maintenance. Simpson said he felt many employees made the schedule change to improve their work/life balance. "Some employees transferred to weekends because their spouse worked weekends, and some employees changed to save on child care costs," he said.

On the weekend you could see employees like Maintenance Worker Brady Shepherd mowing along the road during their regular work schedule Friday through Monday.

Both Schroyer and Simpson said the ability to get work done faster and cheaper was a significant accomplishment that the weekend crews have had a vital role in achieving. "We're getting jobs completed in one week without overtime that used to take two or three weeks," Simpson said. "Employees like getting the work done faster – it's giving us an extra three days of work in a week and allowing us to move on to other projects," he said.

Law enforcement has also been vocal with support for the program. In its first three months of operation, southern weekend crew personnel have aided law enforcement with signage and direction of traffic for three accidents. "Our crew helps officers with traffic flow so they can focus on their job without having to watch their backs, and law enforcement has told us how much they appreciate the assistance," Simpson said.

Both crews perform the same tasks that the regular maintenance crews do – filling potholes, mowing shoulders, sign work, vegetation control, dead animal removal, sweeping after chip seals, relocating equipment and any other tasks that need to be done. Schroyer said that having the weekend crews available is also great customer service. "It's more user-friendly," he said, "We are providing the public with the same access to - us everyday."

According to District Engineer Tom Stehn, the key is flexibility. "The weekend crews provide flexibility to employees for scheduling and maintaining a greater work/life balance. The crews also allow us to operate with increased flexibility in performing maintenance tasks, addressing customer concerns, and responding to roadway events," Stehn said, "It benefits everyone involved."

Employee Crossroad Fund Helping Employees During Hardships

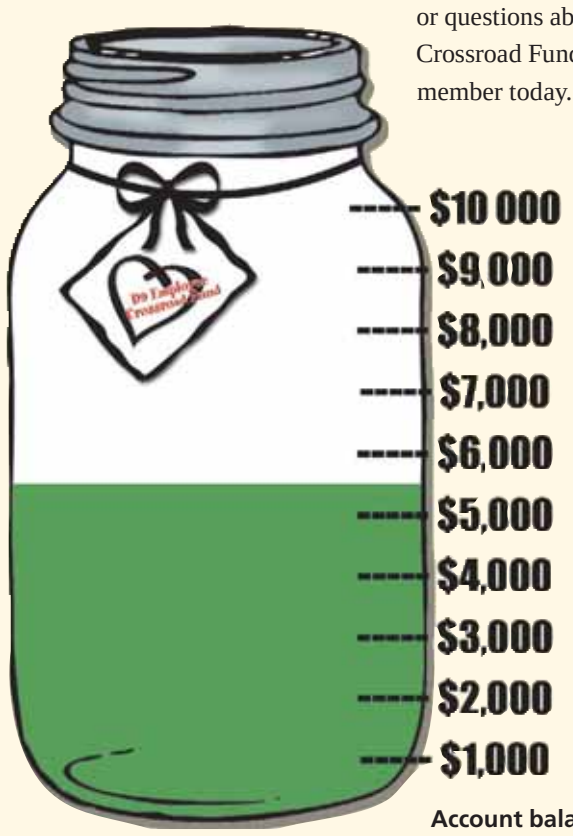
More than a year ago, District 9 started the Employee Crossroad Fund. According to fund committee member Elquin Auala, this fund is designed to help employees who are experiencing a significant hardship due to serious illness, either their own or that of a family member, or a life changing or catastrophic event. "Through support and contributions from employees in our district we have been able to help eight of our coworkers in the first year," stated Auala. Financial donations from the fund have helped eight of our coworkers through 13 individual donations.

The Employee Crossroad Fund was created by the employees for the employees and exists because of generous one-time and monthly contributions. The balance for the fund as of July 15 was almost $5,600.

If an employee is going through a hardship and needs support, they can fill out the online employee recommendation form and submit it to one of the committee members. The organizing committee consists of seven members from across the district including: Mark Thompson, Cindy Dzurick, Tammy Childress, Elquin Auala, Ben Meredith, Jeff Riegle and Kim Hilburn.

A Web site is available through the District 9 intranet. This site provides access to information about the fund, forms, committee members and the current fund balance.

For help filling out a request form or questions about the Employee Crossroad Fund, contact a committee member today.



Account balance as of July 15

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D10 Southeast

Local Celebrity, Neal E. Boyd, Speaks to Youth

Southeast Missouri native Neal E. Boyd, 2008 winner of America's Got Talent, works with KFVS12 and the Southeast Coalition for Roadway Safety to tape a "Buckle Up" public service announcement in front of the "Missouri Wall of Fame" in downtown Cape Girardeau.

Southeast Missouri native and 2008 winner of America's Got Talent, Neal E. Boyd, is using his powerful voice to encourage Missouri's youth to Buckle Up and Arrive Alive. While home in June, Boyd worked with Senior Community Relations Specialist Belinda McMurry, and other Southeast Coalition for Roadway Safety members, to tape a "Buckle Up" public service announcement with local news channel KFVS12.

"We are thrilled to have such a positive role model promoting positive behaviors to our youth," said McMurry. "The fact that he is a local celebrity with national fame, and was generous enough to find time to tape a buckle up commercial really speaks volumes about his character."

McMurry adds that whether he's singing or giving back to the community, Boyd is the type of person that puts his heart into everything he does—taping the PSA was no exception.

"Neal had such an amazing attitude about reaching area teens with the buckle up message," said McMurry. "He was great to work with, and we are honored to have him joining our coalition efforts to reduce roadway fatalities."

The public service announcement will air periodically throughout the year on local channels geared toward youth. The PSA will also be aired on KFVS12, will be able to be seen on the KFVS12 Web site, as well as the Southeast Coalition for Roadway Safety Web site, www.saveMOlives.com/Southeast.

The Southeast Coalition for Roadway Safety consists of individuals working to decrease the number of fatalities on Missouri roadways. Coalition members range from educators and nurses to MoDOT workers and emergency responders. The Southeast District, along with the Southeast Coalition for Roadway Safety, consistently pursues creative ways to help educate area teens, with the hopes of reducing roadway deaths.

For more information on youth efforts in your area, or how to become a part of the Southeast Coalition for Roadway Safety, contact Senior Community Relations Specialist Belinda McMurry at 573-472-5333 or *belinda.mcmurry@modot.mo.gov.*

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Deckless Bridge Utilized in D10

Practical Design: First of Its Kind in District

In February of this year, the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission awarded a contract for improvements to Route A in Scott County. The $284,804 contract was awarded to Joe's Bridge & Grading, Inc., Poplar Bluff.

The project included replacing the bridge over Caney Creek, north of New Hamburg, with a precast-prestressed concrete box girder bridge. There are several benefits to utilizing this type of precast-prestressed bridge for this project, instead of a conventional girder bridge with a concrete deck.

"Anytime you can simplify the structure, you speed up the construction and potentially reduce the cost," said Project Manager Andy Meyer.

The bridge is a deckless bridge. Instead of adding a regular concrete deck, or asphalt driving surface, to the bridge, the contractors utilize the deck beams as the driving surface. This innovative design allows MoDOT to deliver an economical project of excellent quality in a manner that will reduce the duration of the road closure by several weeks.

Contractors closed Route A on May 15. Currently, construction of the bridge is significantly ahead of schedule. The bridge is expected to be complete by July 24, which is ahead of the original completion date by approximately three weeks.

The precast-prestressed concrete box girder bridge, over Caney Creek, north of New Hamburg (above), is near completion, lacking only the smoothly ground surface, rail installation, and striping. The diamond grinder (large machine on the bridge) smoothes and textures the surface of the beams to provide a desirable driving surface.

Route 34/72 Ribbon Cutting Held in Cape County

District 10 held a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the completion of the Route 34/72 project in Jackson.

Event speakers and special guests included: Tom Schulte on behalf of U.S. Sen. Kit Bond; Christy Ferrell on behalf of U.S. Sen. Claire McCaskill; Kristi Nitsch on behalf of U.S. Rep. Jo Ann Emerson; State Rep. Billy Pat Wright; Jackson Mayor Barbara Lohr; and District Engineer Mark Shelton.

The project included widening and resurfacing the route to four lanes from County Road 335 to the Route 72 (Starlight) intersection, as well as installing signals at the intersections.

"We have accomplished our goal of making travel safer and easier by reducing the number of potential points that could lead to congestion," said Project Manager Eric Krapf.

Prior to cutting the ceremonial ribbon, State Rep. Billy Pat Wright speaks to Jackson residents and other guests during the Route 34/72 ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Connections

The mission of *Connections* is to be a monthly source of Missouri Department of Transportation news and feature articles that connect employees statewide. It is distributed to MoDOT employees and retirees.

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Traveler Information Map Now Lets You See Into the Future

by Matt Hiebert

MoDOT's Traveler Information Map has been showing drivers where active work zones are located for the past two years. It allows them to prepare for delays and even reroute trips if necessary.

But recent improvements to the online map gives travelers even more flexibility in planning their trip. In fact, now the map lets them see into the future.

With the addition of the new blue icon, Missouri travelers can now see where pending work zones are scheduled up to a week in advance. This allows Web visitors to better plan their trips, saving them time and frustration on the road.

Motor carriers also benefit from this snapshot of the future. With the ability to view planned work zones, dispatchers and drivers can adjust travel time or look for alternative routes days before they hit the highway.

Activating the blue icon is easy. Visitors just need to click on the Future Work Zone check box in the left hand navigation and the blue signs will appear on the map. For more information, they can place their cursor over the icon and a pop up box will appear describing the work.

Of course, weather and other factors can change a work zones status, so travelers should still consult the map on the day of their trip to view any reschedules.

Knowing what waits for you on the road means a safer, less stressful trip. With the addition of the new blue icon, travelers can spend more time on vacation and less time on the road.

Tour of Missouri Brings Thousands to the Show-Me State

by Sue Cox

The line is set. The gun is fired. The race is on. And, once again, Missouri's highways are on display throughout the world as the third annual Tour of Missouri begins in St. Louis on Sept. 7. This year's new champion will be applauded in a Kansas City ceremony on Sept. 13, following the completion of the final stage.

Thousands of fans will watch in person or on national and international television as 15 teams compete for top honors in a 600-mile race across Missouri roads for seven consecutive days.

"We're proud that the national and international coverage of the race will highlight our state," said Director Pete Rahn. "Missouri's highway system will be a significant feature of those watching the event from around the world."

MoDOT's involvement with the Tour of Missouri began early this year. A statewide steering team led by Central Office Transportation Planning, consisting of Central Office and district experts in traffic, maintenance, community and government relations, railroads and planning, has worked several months with Medalist Sports, event manager, to outline a race route that is safe and attractive for both race participants and race observers.

MoDOT staff representing the districts along the race route – Districts 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 9 and 10 – has taken the lead in identifying the final race route, developing traffic management plans, and driving and logging information about the route.

Now that the route is set, the MoDOT focus is one of sharing information with the public about traffic interruptions along the state highways during the race.

"We've worked hard to contribute to making this a successful event for the state of Missouri," Rahn said. "As the race goes along, safety for the traveling public and for the cyclists is our major concern."

For more race information, race route details and photographs, visit *www.tourofmissouri.com* and *www.modot.org*.

Cathy Morrison